

**REMARKS**

The Final Office Action of September 13, 2006, and the Advisory Action of December 12, 2006, have been received and reviewed.

Claims 1, 3-27, and 29-37 are currently pending and under consideration in the above-referenced application. Of these, claims 1, 3-14, 23-27, and 29-37 stand rejected, while claims 15-22 recite allowable subject matter.

It is respectfully proposed that the subject matter recited in allowable claim 15 be incorporated into independent claim 1, that claim 15 be canceled without prejudice or disclaimer, that each of claims 16-19 be revised to depend from independent claim 1 rather than from canceled claim 15, and that claims 31-37 be canceled without prejudice or disclaimer.

Reconsideration of the above-referenced application is respectfully requested.

**Rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a)**

Each of claims 1, 3-14, 23-27, and 29-37 has been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a).

The standard for establishing and maintaining a rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) is set forth in M.P.E.P. § 706.02(j), which provides:

To establish a *prima facie* case of obviousness, three basic criteria must be met. First, there must be some suggestion or motivation, either in the references themselves or in the knowledge generally available to one of ordinary skill in the art, to modify the reference or combine reference teachings. Second, there must be a reasonable expectation of success. Finally, the prior art reference (or references when combined) must teach or suggest all the claim limitations. The teaching or suggestion to make the claimed combination and the reasonable expectation of success must both be found in the prior art, and not based on applicant's disclosure. *In re Vaeck*, 947 F.2d 488, 20 USPQ2d 1438 (Fed. Cir. 1991).

**Spence in View of Suh**

Claims 1, 3-9, 23-27, and 29-36 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) for being drawn to subject matter that is purportedly obvious in view of the subject matter taught in U.S. Patent 5,123,734 of Spence et al. (hereinafter "Spence"), in view of teachings from U.S. Patent Application Publication 2004/0251242 of Suh (hereinafter "Suh").

It is proposed that independent claim 1 be amended to include the subject matter that was previously recited in claim 15, which the Office has indicated to be allowable. Accordingly, in addition to the other reasons that have already been set forth in the above-referenced application, it is respectfully submitted that, under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a), amended independent claim 1 is allowable over the subject matter taught in Spence and Suh.

Claims 3-14, 23-27, and 29 are each allowable, among other reasons, for depending directly or indirectly from independent claim 1, which is allowable.

It is also proposed that claims 31-36 be canceled without prejudice or disclaimer, which would render the 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) rejections of these claims moot.

Spence, Suh, and Philippi

Claims 10-14 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) for reciting subject matter which is assertedly obvious in view of the subject matter taught in Spence, in view of teachings from Suh and, further, in view of the teachings of U.S. Patent 6,483,596 of Philippi et al. (hereinafter "Philippi").

Each of claims 10-14 is allowable, among various other reasons, such as those that were previously set forth in the above-referenced application, for depending indirectly from claim 1, which is allowable.

Spence, Suh, and Pryor

Claim 37 has been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) for being directed to subject matter that is allegedly unpatentable over the teachings of Spence, in view of teachings from Suh and, further, in view of the subject matter taught in U.S. Patent 5,871,391 to Pryor (hereinafter "Pryor").

Claim 37 is allowable, among other reasons, including those already presented in the above-referenced application, for depending independent claim 31, which is allowable.

**Allowable Subject Matter**

The indication that claims 15-22 recite allowable subject matter is gratefully acknowledged. It is proposed that the subject matter recited in allowable claim 15 be incorporated into independent claim 1.

**Entry of Amendments**

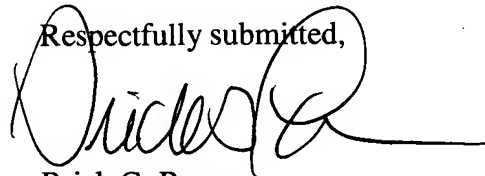
It is respectfully requested that the proposed claim amendments be entered, as their entry would not introduce new matter into the above-referenced application and would not necessitate an additional search.

In the event that the proposed claim amendments are not entered, it is respectfully requested that they be entered upon the filing of a Notice of Appeal in the above-referenced application.

**CONCLUSION**

It is respectfully submitted that each of claims 1, 3-14, 16-27, 29, and 30 is allowable. An early notice of the allowability of each of these claims is respectfully solicited, as is an indication that the above-referenced application has been passed for issuance. If any issues preventing allowance of the above-referenced application remain which might be resolved by way of a telephone conference, the Office is kindly invited to contact the undersigned attorney.

Respectfully submitted,



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Date: December 27, 2006  
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